Camarasauridae

Camarasauridae (meaning "chambered lizards") is a family of neosauropod dinosaurs within the clade Macronaria, the sister group to Titanosauriformes. [5][6] Among sauropods, camarasaurids are small to medium-sized, with relatively short necks. They are visually identifiable by a short skull with large nares, and broad, spatulate teeth filling a thick jaw. [7][8] Based on cervical vertebrae and cervical rib biomechanics, camarasaurids most likely moved their necks in a vertical, rather than horizontal, sweeping motion, in contrast to most diplodocids. [7] Cladistically, they are defined to be all sauropods more closely related to *Camarasaurus supremus* than to *Saltasaurus loricatus*. [9]

Diagnostic characters

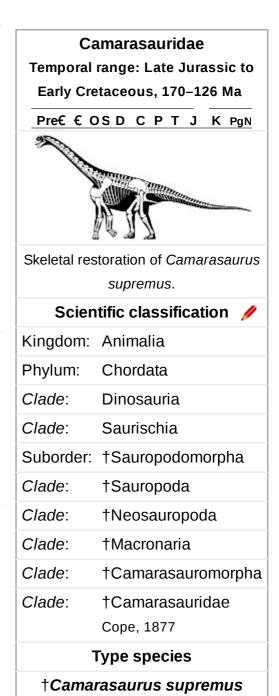
Several skeletal features have been used to characterize the camarasaurids. In the skull, these include an external narial diameter approximately 40% of the long-axis length of the skull, an arched internarial bar, a short muzzle anterior to the nares, and maxillary shelf.^[10] In the rest of the axial skeleton, these include flat ventral faces on the cervical vertebrae, a triangular flare to the neural spines of the middle and posterior dorsal vertebrae, and a concave posterior surface to the anterior thoracic ribs, as well as an external haemal canal across the anterior vertebrae of the tail.^{[10][11]} A reduction to two carpals, long metacarpals relative to the radius, and a twisted ischial shaft serve to identify the appendicular skeleton.^{[7][11]}

Palaeobiogeography

Broadly speaking, camarasaurids occupied a distribution limited to the <u>Laurasian</u> continent during the <u>Upper Jurassic</u>. Most currently accepted camarasaurid specimens have been discovered in the <u>Morrison Formation</u> of North America, however some specimens from the African <u>Tendaguru Formation</u> have been speculated to belong to the genus *Camarasaurus*, and the closely related *Lourinhasaurus* was found in Portugal. [12][13][14]

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Cope, 1877a

Species

Bellusaurus^[1]

Camarasaurus

Cathetosaurus^[2]

Lourinhasaurus

■ Dashanpusaurus^[3]

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- ?Oplosaurus^[4]
- Tehuelchesaurus

Synonyms

Morosauridae Marsh 1882

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